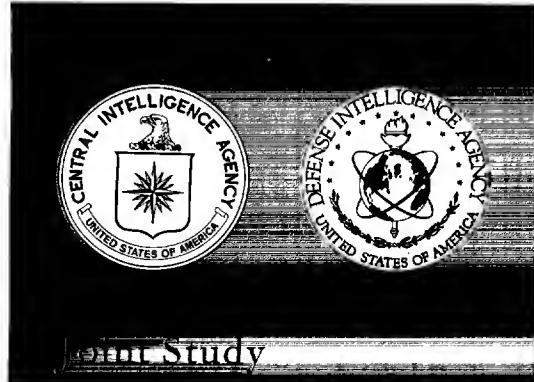


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NSA review completed



Communist Violations of the Vietnam and Laos Settlement Agreements and Related Developments

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6 February 1974

Forty-Ninth Report

COMMUNIST VIOLATIONS OF THE VIETNAM AND LAOS SETTLEMENT AGREEMENTS AND RELATED DEVELOPMENTS*

(This report covers the week from
30 January through 5 February 1974)

The Key Points

- The recent lull in troop infiltration appears over as four new regular groups were detected starting south during the week and Hanoi apparently intends to send some 11,000 troops during February.
- The NVA 9th Infantry Regiment is relocating from southern Laos to Pleiku Province in South Vietnam's MR 2. In addition, a North Vietnamese infantry regiment has withdrawn from Quang Tri Province to southern Quang Binh Province.
- After a slowdown during the Tet holiday, North Vietnamese logistic activity in Indochina returned to its normal dry season level last week.
- Increased construction activity has been observed in northern Laos. The North Vietnamese are building more permanent structures and improving the road network in the Plaine des Jarres area.

* This report has been prepared jointly by the Central Intelligence Agency and the Department of Defense.

Preface

This report is the forty-ninth in a series summarizing evidence received during the reporting period of (I) Communist efforts to infiltrate new manpower and military supplies toward and into South Vietnam, (II) Communist-initiated combat activity in violation of the Vietnam and Laos settlement agreements, and (III) other developments affecting Communist military capabilities in Indochina.

DETAILS

I. Infiltration and Redeployments of North Vietnamese Personnel and Military Supplies***Personnel Infiltration***

1. The recent lull in Communist troop infiltration is apparently over; four new regular groups were detected last week moving southward in the system. Three of these groups, which have an estimated total strength of some 1,500 troops, are traveling to the COSVN area while the fourth, with about 600 troops, is en route to the B-3 Front. All the groups were detected at Binh Tram (BT) 8 near Vinh, North Vietnam. In addition, eight special-purpose groups totaling more than 450 personnel were reported in a BT 8 message on 2 February. All of the groups bore "C" prefixes -- a designator seen for the first time several weeks ago. Personnel in these groups appear to be high-ranking and were identified as belonging to the "Unification Section," suggesting they may be associated with North Vietnam's reunification effort.

2. In addition to the infiltration groups detected last week, a 30 January message from BT 8 to its subordinate elements instructed them to prepare to process at least one regular group every other day during February. If this schedule is followed, some 11,000 troops would transit the BT 8 area this month, substantiating the mid-November projection by the North Vietnamese for monthly infiltration to the B-3 Front and COSVN.

3. In other infiltration activity, five regular groups (3091 through 3095), first detected in southern Laos in early January en route to the B-3 Front, have been identified as the 9th Regiment of the NVA 968th Division. At least some of these groups, which bear unique designators probably assigned by NVA Military Region 559, already have crossed into Pleiku Province (see section on unit deployments). Because the 9th Regiment moved from southern Laos into South Vietnam and therefore does not represent infiltration from North Vietnam, our estimate of infiltration starts to the B-3 Front -- shown in the table below -- was reduced by 2,000 troops. As a result of the detection of one new regular group destined for this area as noted in paragraph 1, however, the net reduction from last week's figure is 1,500 troops.

**Comparative Starts of Troops
from North Vietnam, by Destination
1 September - 5 February**

	1972-73	1973-74
Total	73,500	47,500
MR Tri-Thien-Hue	18,500	2,000
MR 5	9,000	2,000
B-3 Front	14,000	5,500
COSVN	22,000	15,500
Southern Laos/MR 559	10,000	22,500

Redeployments

9th NVA Regiment Moving to Central Highlands

4. COMINT has confirmed previous indications that the North Vietnamese 9th Infantry Regiment, 968th Division, is relocating from southern Laos to the central highlands area of South Vietnam (see the 22 January report). In addition to the equation of five 3xxx infiltration groups with the movement of the 9th Regiment, the headquarters of the regiment's 1st Battalion was located on 1 February in western Pleiku Province. The deployment of the 9th Regiment -- which should be completed shortly -- increases Communist regular combat strength in MR 2 by some 2,000 men. The relatively high strength of the regiment suggests that it had been reinforced from 5xxx series infiltrators sent to southern Laos earlier this dry season. With the 9th Regiment's move, the Communists will have an increased capability to oppose any South Vietnamese incursions along their strategic supply route in western South Vietnam (see map on Communist and South Vietnamese Combat Forces in South Vietnam).

*Withdrawal of Another NVA Infantry Regiment
from Northern South Vietnam*

5. The 270B NVA Independent Infantry Regiment has relocated from northern MR 1 to southern Quang Binh Province in North Vietnam and is now subordinate to the newly reconstituted 341st Division (see the 19 December 1973 report). Analysis of recent COMINT indicates that the

Communist and South Vietnamese Regular Combat Forces in South Vietnam

South Vietnam

<i>Regular Combat Forces</i>		MR 1
<i>VC/NVA</i> ¹	<i>RVNAF</i> ²	<i>VC/NVA</i>
186,000	372,000	86,000
		103,000
		325th
		324B
		Airborn
		304th
		1st
		711th
		2nd
		2nd ³
		3rd
		673rd AAA
		Regional
		Force

1. Includes VC/NVA personnel in ground combat, combat support, and air defense units and local force companies and platoons.
 2. RVNAF Ground Order of Battle. Includes assigned personnel in ARVN/VNMC ground combat and combat support units, and Regional Force battalions. Although present for duty strength is no longer available, it is estimated to be about 85% of assigned strength.
 3. Only one infantry regiment subordinate to the division.

MR 3

<i>VC/NVA</i>	<i>RVNAF</i>
38,000	94,000
9th	25th
7th	18th
5th	5th
77th AAA	Regional
429th Sap Cmd	Forces
69th Arty Cmd	

MR 4

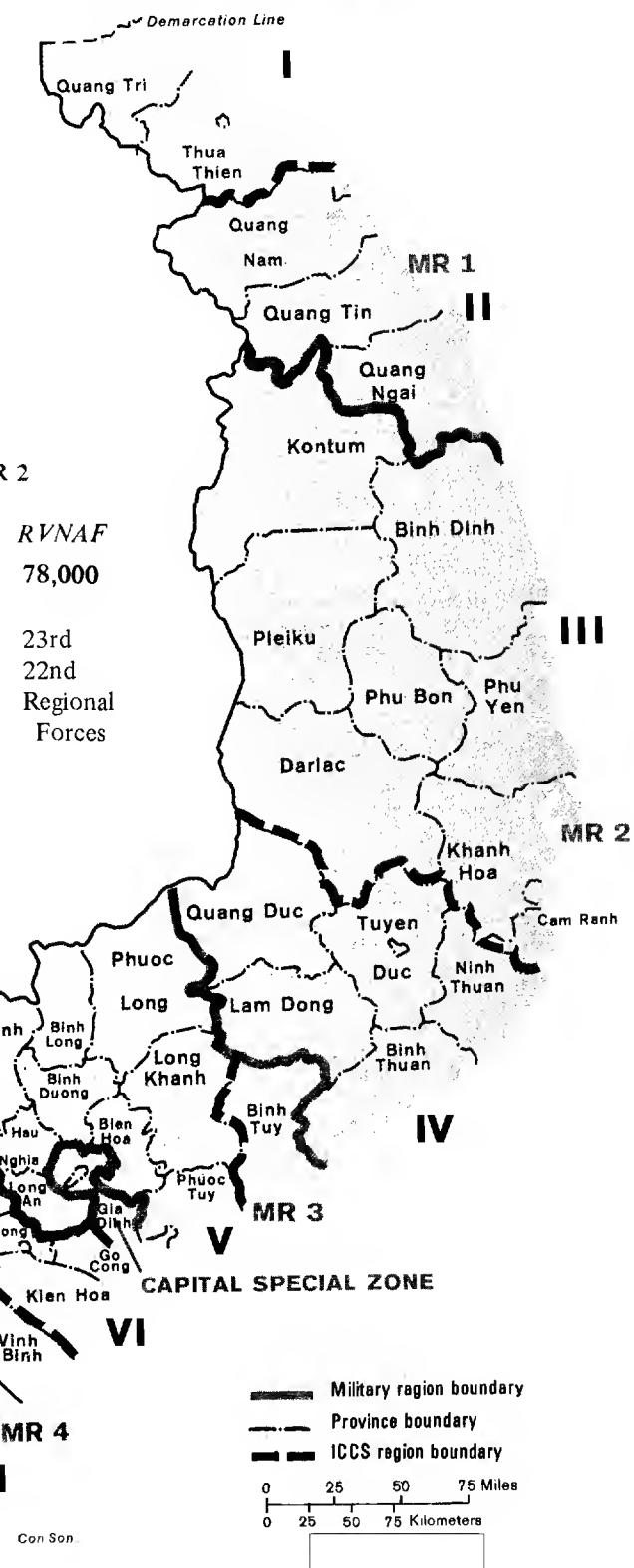
<i>VC/NVA</i>	<i>RVN AF</i>
24,000	97,000
1st ³	21st
	9th
	7th
	Regional I



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regiment withdrew from Quang Tri Province during the latter part of 1973 and was subordinated to the 341st Division in late December - permitting identification of the division as an infantry unit. With the 270B Regiment now located near the division headquarters in Quang Binh Province, Communist regular combat strength in MR I has been reduced by 2,000 men. The 341st Infantry Division now consists of three regiments -- the 31st, 32nd, and 270B -- with some 6,000 troops. Although the unit is not currently targeted against northern South Vietnam, it could, if needed, move south quickly to reinforce Communist forces there.

Movement of Military Equipment and Supplies February 1974

North Vietnam

6. Following last week's slowdown caused by the Tet holiday, Communist logistic activity gradually returned to its previous level during this reporting period. On 30 January, BT 8 at Vinh ordered subordinate elements at the Cho Si Railroad Station to assemble more than 800 tons of cargo for shipment farther south, including at least seven tons of 130-mm artillery ammunition and 70 tons of construction materials. Three days later, on 2 February, logistic units at Vinh reported receiving 50 tons of ordnance, including some 20 tons of small arms and 30 tons of antiaircraft weapons. On 5 February, a storage facility north of Vinh reported it had received 11 railcars from a logistic unit at Thanh Hoa on 4 February carrying 145 tons of ammunition, including 108 tons of 57-mm antiaircraft ammunition and 12 37-mm artillery pieces.

7. Farther south, between Quang Khe and the DMZ, BT 26 was involved in fairly heavy post-holiday logistic activity. On 28 January an element of BT 26 reported that it had some 210 tons of cargo in storage, most of which was weapons, and that 100 tons were to be sent out shortly. During the next three days, BT 26 reportedly received at least 150 tons of cargo from train and barge shipments and dispatched an equal amount of goods. Finally, on 3 February, COMINT indicated that BT 26 sent another 150 tons of unidentified cargo.

Laos

8. In Laos, COMINT and photography reflected heavy truck traffic along the length of the Communists' new dual-lane supply corridor. During the period 28-31 January, COMINT indicated that logistic units along the southern part of the corridor had handled at least 650 vehicles. In most cases, no information was provided on what was being carried in the trucks, although one message did specify that 78 vehicles were carrying fuel.

9. Aerial reconnaissance over the Panhandle [redacted] generally confirmed what was seen in COMINT. During most of the

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reporting period, photography showed 100-200 trucks moving daily between Moung Nong and the tri-border area. Traffic was fairly equally divided between northward and southward movements, apparently indicating that the vehicles are delivering their cargo and then returning for more goods. Coverage during the week also showed that Route 9 from Tchepone to the Khe Sanh area in South Vietnam is in good condition and sustaining heavy traffic.

10. In other activity, logistic units may have begun cargo shipments through the Mu Gia Pass on the North Vietnam/Laos border to storage areas located along Route 12 for future shipment through the Laotian Panhandle. A 29 January intercept disclosed that 23 vehicles would move through the Mu Gia Pass, including 10 trucks carrying weapons. Plans for supply shipments through this area were noted in early December, when MR 559 instructed the 14th Engineering Regiment to open the road through the Pass. The road through Mu Gia Pass is motorable, although [redacted] photographic coverage of it does not show any recent upgrading (see the map on transportation).

South Vietnam

11. For the first time in several weeks, photography over the Communists' western supply corridor in northern South Vietnam provided information on the level of logistic activity in this area. [redacted] photography showed 24 trucks south of Khe Sanh on Communist Route 14. According to the field read-out, the road is in good condition and shows signs of considerable traffic. Farther south on this road, 11 trucks were seen [redacted] near the A Shau Valley. This section of the road was also reported in good condition and supporting moderate traffic, according to field analysis.

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12. In the months ahead the Communists will probably make greater use of this supply corridor. Since October, heavy rains have made movement along the northern part of the corridor difficult, and only during the past few weeks has the weather along this route improved. During the past 6 months, however, North Vietnamese engineering units have expended considerable energy on maintaining the road and lessening the damage from the rains, suggesting that the North Vietnamese intend to make heavy use of this corridor as soon as they are able.

Cambodia

13. [redacted] photography indicates that the Communists are conducting extensive logistic activity between southern Laos and northeastern Cambodia. Coverage [redacted] showed 74 large and

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medium-sized boats on the Tonle Kong River between Attopeu, Laos, and Stung Treng, Cambodia. Thirty-two of these were moving supplies southward into Cambodia, while the other 42, which were empty, were either moored or traveling northward. An additional 10 large boats were noted on the Mekong River between Stung Treng and Kratie - three moving southward with supplies and seven moving northward empty.

14. The only road in northeastern Cambodia that was noted in photography as being active was Route 19, which runs eastward from Stung Treng to the central highlands of Vietnam. The road was supporting moderate traffic, and four loaded trucks were observed moving eastward. Another 10 empty trucks were traveling west.

15. The logistic activity in Cambodia apparently is connected with the North Vietnamese agreement to deliver 900 tons of materiel and 296 vehicles to the Khmer Communists (KC) in exchange for 5,000 tons of rice. The level of southward movement on the Tonle Kong and Mekong Rivers is consonant with the magnitude of North Vietnamese aid deliveries, and the waterborne logistic system in the area reportedly has supplemented the movement of vehicles in the past. The eastward movement on Route 19 coincides with previous KC messages which indicated that the KC rice shipments would be going to the North Vietnamese B-3 Front located in the central highlands.

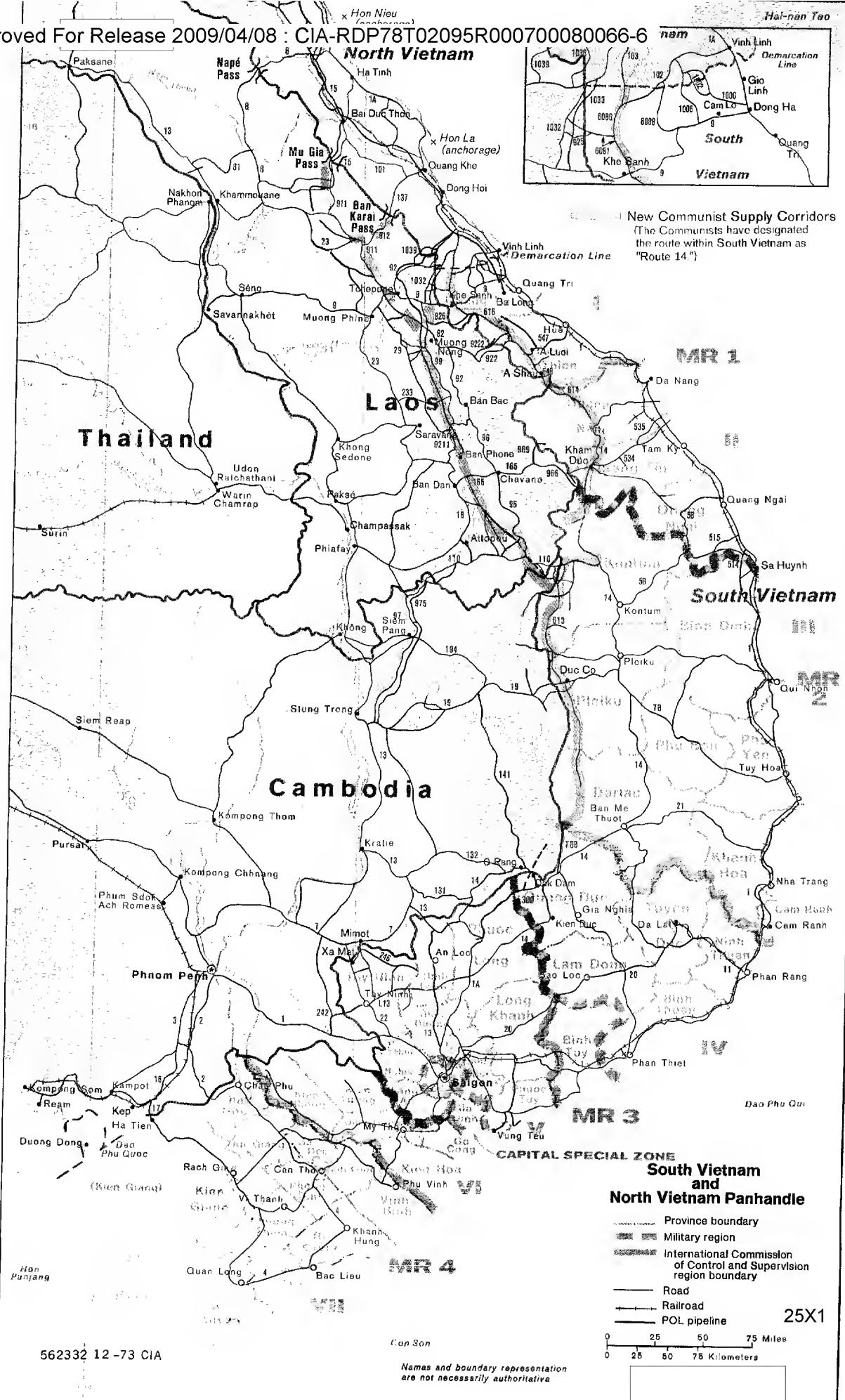
16. The ultimate disposition of the North Vietnamese aid deliveries remains unclear. KC messages have detailed the planned allocation of materiel to regional authorities, but intercepted KC timetables and the lack of observed activity on logistic corridors leading toward the "front lines" from Kratie and Stung Treng suggest that internal KC deliveries probably started subsequent to the photographic coverage.

II. Communist-Initiated Combat Activity in South Vietnam and Laos

South Vietnam

17. In South Vietnam the total number of Communist-initiated cease-fire violations reported by the South Vietnamese Armed Forces since 27 January 1973, since 15 June 1973, and for the past week (30 January-5 February 1974) are shown below:

North Vietnam



Military Region	Total Since 27 Jan 1973 Cease-fire		Total Since 15 Jun 1973 Cease-fire		Last Week (30 Jan - 5 Feb 1974)	
	Major	Minor	Major	Minor	Major	Minor
Total	4,656	31,232	2,287	17,277	59 (33) ¹	437 (402) ¹
MR 1	1,569	5,783	544	2,424	3	19
MR 2	804	5,160	540	3,306	15	88
MR 3	730	5,309	328	2,733	22	47
MR 4	1,553	14,980	875	8,814	19	283

¹ Figures in parentheses denote totals of the previous week.

18. Some of these violations may have been initiated by South Vietnamese forces rather than Communist forces, and it is impossible in all cases to determine the actual instigator. The tabulation above, however, shows fairly accurately the trend in the amount of combat that has occurred in South Vietnam since the cease-fire. The fact that a combat incident occurred at a particular time and place is generally reported accurately by the South Vietnamese, even though the question of who started it may not always be treated objectively. Operational reports since 19 December, however, have attempted to distinguish between violations initiated by Communist and friendly forces. Only those violations designated as Communist-initiated are reported in the above tabulation.

Laos

19. There was no significant military activity in Laos during the past week.

III. Other Developments Affecting Communist Military Capabilities in Indochina

Communist Construction Activity in Northern Laos

20. Aerial reconnaissance during January shows that Communist construction crews have been active in northern Laos as well as in the southern Panhandle. In the Plaine des Jarres area, North Vietnamese and Pathet Lao forces have almost completed an extensive program to construct permanent barracks and storage and support buildings along the primary route structure leading between the North Vietnam border and major towns on the Plain. The majority of the new structures observed under construction [redacted] appeared complete on photography of [redacted]. The buildings have been erected near previously established bivouac and storage areas and are generally arranged in clusters of 8 to 20 units.

21. Communist road crews have also restored and improved much of the main road network on the Plain. The amount of truck traffic using east-west Route 7 increased from a light volume in November to a moderate level during December and late January, with the direction of travel primarily westward from North Vietnam. For example, 27 of the 34 trucks observed moving on Route 7 on 27 December were headed west with cargoes of oil drums, sacks, and other materials. Recent COMINT has reflected the movement of considerable numbers of weapons and ammunition as well as large amounts of petroleum to BT 11 in central North Vietnam. BT 11 is the controlling authority for logistic movements to northern Laos via Route 7.

22. The photography also showed recent large shipments of petroleum and other supplies into the Plain. Several reactivated and improved storage areas along Routes 7/71 contained numerous stacks of crated supplies as

[redacted] More significantly, a large part of the new construction activity apparently is for developing petroleum storage capacity. To this end, more than 40 buildings have been erected along newly constructed spur roads -- apparently for storage of oil drums. Two such areas are located several miles from the newly built airstrip at Phong Savan and about 20 miles from the recently restored airfield at Xiangkhoang.

23. As in other North Vietnamese controlled areas of Laos and South Vietnam, great efforts have been made since the cease-fire to improve logistic routes from North Vietnam. In each case, new petroleum pipelines and petroleum storage facilities have been constructed to support an increasingly mechanized North Vietnamese military structure. In the case of northern Laos, some of the efforts associated with petroleum apparently are to support cargo and VIP aircraft flights.

SAM Sites in North Vietnam

24. Photography of North Vietnam [redacted] showed a record number of occupied surface-to-air missile (SAM) sites, including thirty-two SA-2 sites. Moreover, CIA analysis indicates 11 SA-3 sites also were occupied; DOD analysis indicates only six occupied SA-3 sites plus SA-3 equipment -- not considered to be in a firing configuration -- at five other locations. Unlike those for the SA-2s, all of the SA-3 sites and locations were concentrated within 30 miles of Hanoi. The clustering of these sites in the large Xuan Mai and Phuc Yen training areas most likely means that the SA-3 system is still undergoing crew training and testing, prior to deployment as an integrated part of the country's air defense system. On the basis of analysis of Hanoi's SAM communications, it is estimated that there are currently between 44 and 48 firing battalions in the country, each battalion capable of occupying one site. [redacted]

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ANNEX

INFILTRATION OF NORTH VIETNAMESE
PERSONNEL TO THE SOUTH

Since the signing of the cease-fire settlement for South Vietnam, more than 109,000 North Vietnamese troops and specialists have infiltrated southward. More than 84,000 of this total have started south since 27 January 1973, while the other 25,000 were moving in the pipeline on that date. Since 15 June 1973, when the original accord was reaffirmed, more than 58,000 troops and specialists have been sent south. The following table shows the number of North Vietnamese troops starting south, by month and destination, since 1 January 1973.

Number of Troops Entering the Pipeline Destined
for South Vietnam, Southern Laos, and Cambodia
Since 1 January 1973¹

	COSVN	B-3 Front	MR 5	MR Tri-Thien-Hue	Southern Laos/ MR 559	Total
Total	28,500	11,000	9,000	14,000	26,500	89,000
1973						
Jan	7,000	5,000	4,000	2,500	....	18,500
Feb	5,000	500	....	1,500	1,000	8,000
Mar	....	....	....	1,000	....	1,000
Apr	1,000	....	....	....	....	1,000
May	....	....	....	7,000	....	7,000
Jun	....	....	....	....	1,500	1,500
Jul	....	....	3,000	....	....	3,000
Aug	....	....	....	....	1,500	1,500
Sep	....	....	2,000	2,000	3,000	7,000
Oct	....	....	....	....	14,000	14,000
Nov	1,000	1,000	....	....	5,500	7,500
Dec	3,500	1,000	....	....	....	4,500
1974						
Jan	10,000	3,000	....	....	....	13,000
Feb 1-5	1,000	500	....	....	....	1,500

1. Excludes special-purpose personnel. The totals are rounded to the nearest 500.

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